

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 33. (CANCELED).

34. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member and a pair of elongate flexures wherein each flexure includes at least one opening, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon, wherein the fluid permeable elastic member includes metallized fabric;
- (b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition by expanding the flexures;
- (c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and
- (d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue and allowing at least a portion of the moisture to pass through the openings in the flexures.

Claims 35 – 37. (CANCELED).

38. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member and a pair of elongate flexures wherein each flexure includes at least one opening, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;
- (b) positioning the electrode array into an organ and into contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition by expanding the flexures;

(c) measuring the approximate length and width of the organ, selecting an ablation power corresponding to the measured length and width, and delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue at approximately the selected power to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue and allowing at least a portion of the moisture to pass through the openings in the flexures.

39. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 38 wherein the step of measuring the approximate width of the organ includes the step of expanding the flexures to an expanded condition and deriving the approximate width of the uterus from the relative positions of the flexures in the expanded condition.

40. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 39 wherein step (c) further includes selecting an ablation power which is proportional to the measured length times the measured width.

41. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 34 wherein the metallized fabric includes yarns of elastic material and yarns of inelastic material.

42. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 41 wherein the metallized fabric includes yarns of spandex and nylon.

43. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member and a pair of elongate flexures wherein each flexure includes at least one opening, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon, wherein the array material has elasticity in a transverse direction and in a longitudinal direction and wherein the elasticity in the transverse direction is greater than the elasticity in the longitudinal direction

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition by expanding the flexures;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue and allowing at least a portion of the moisture to pass through the openings in the flexures.

Claim 44. (CANCELED).

45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon, wherein the fluid permeable elastic member includes metallized fabric;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member, away from tissue and into the tubular member.

Claims 46-48. (CANCELED).

49. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array within an organ and into contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) measuring the approximate length and width of the organ, selecting an ablation power corresponding to the measured length and width, and delivering RF

energy through the array to the tissue at approximately the selected power to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member, away from tissue and into the tubular member.

50. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 49 wherein the providing step provides the electrode array to be carried by a pair of elongate flexures, and wherein the step of measuring the approximate width of the organ includes the step of expanding the flexures to an expanded condition and deriving the approximate width of the uterus from the relative positions of the flexures in the expanded condition.

51. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 50 wherein step (c) further includes selecting an ablation power which is proportional to the measured length times the measured width.

52. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 45 wherein the metallized fabric includes yarns of elastic material and yarns of inelastic material.

53. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 52 wherein the metallized fabric includes yarns of spandex and nylon.

54. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon, wherein the array material has elasticity in a transverse direction and in a longitudinal direction and wherein the elasticity in the transverse direction is greater than the elasticity in the longitudinal direction;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member, away from tissue and into the tubular member.

Claims 55 – 57. (CANCELED).

58. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon, wherein the fluid permeable elastic member includes metallized fabric;
- (b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition;
- (c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and
- (d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue, and applying [[the]] suction to draw ~~drawing~~ the moisture through the tubular member.

Claims 59 – 61. (CANCELED).

62. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;
- (b) positioning the electrode array into and organ and contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition;
- (c) measuring the approximate length and width of the organ, selecting an ablation power corresponding to the measured length and width, and delivering RF energy to the tissue at approximately the selected power to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue, ~~[[the]]~~ and applying suction to draw ~~drawing~~ the moisture through the tubular member.

63. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 62 wherein the providing step provides the electrode array to be carried by a pair of elongate flexures, and wherein the step of measuring the approximate width of the organ includes the step of expanding the flexures to an expanded condition and deriving the approximate width of the uterus from the relative positions of the flexures in the expanded condition.

64. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 63 wherein step (c) further includes selecting an ablation power which is proportional to the measured length times the measured width.

65. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 58 wherein the metallized fabric includes yarns of elastic material and yarns of inelastic material.

66. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 65 wherein the metallized fabric includes yarns of spandex and nylon.

67. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon wherein the array material has elasticity in a transverse direction and in a longitudinal direction and wherein the elasticity in the transverse direction is greater than the elasticity in the longitudinal direction;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue, and applying [[the]] suction to draw ~~drawing~~ the moisture through the tubular member.

Claims 68 – 74. (CANCELED).

75. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;
- (b) positioning the electrode array within an organ and into contact with tissue to be ablated;
- (c) measuring the approximate length and width of the organ, selecting an ablation power corresponding to the measured length and width, and delivering the RF energy to the tissue at approximately the selected power to cause the tissue to dehydrate;
- (d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue; and
- (e) applying suction through the tubular member to draw the tissue into contact with the electrode array.

76. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 75 wherein the step of measuring the approximate width of the organ includes the step of expanding the flexures to an expanded condition and deriving the approximate width of the ~~uterus~~ organ from the relative positions of the flexures in the expanded condition.

77. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 75 wherein step (c) further includes selecting an ablation power which is proportional to the measured length times the measured width.

78. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of: The method of claim 71 wherein

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member including metallized fabric having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon, the metallized fabric including includes yarns of elastic material and yarns of inelastic material;

(b) positioning the electrode array into contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate;

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue and

(e) applying suction through the tubular member to draw the tissue into contact with the electrode array.

79. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 78 wherein the metallized fabric includes yarns of spandex and nylon.

80. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon, wherein the array material has elasticity in a transverse direction and in a longitudinal direction and wherein the elasticity in the transverse direction is greater than the elasticity in the longitudinal direction;

(b) positioning the electrode array into contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate;

- (d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue; and
- (e) applying suction through the tubular member to draw the tissue into contact with the electrode array.

Claims 81 – 83. (CANCELED).

84. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 5 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an ablation device including an expandable ~~the electrode array~~ is a bipolar electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member and a pair of elongate flexures wherein each flexure includes at least one opening, the electrode array comprising a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;
- (b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition by expanding the flexures;
- (c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and
- (d) during step (c), applying suction through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue and allowing at least a portion of the moisture to pass through the openings in the flexures.

85. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 6 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing an ablation device including ~~the electrode array~~ is a bipolar electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;
- (b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member, away from tissue and into the tubular member.

86. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 7 wherein the~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array is a bipolar electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction to the tubular member and through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue, the suction drawing the moisture through the tubular member.

87. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 15 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an the electrode array is a bipolar electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array into contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate;

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue; and

(e) applying suction through the tubular member to draw the tissue into contact with the electrode array.

88. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 5 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member and a pair of elongate flexures wherein each flexure includes at least one opening, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition by expanding the flexures;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue and allowing at least a portion of the moisture to pass through the openings in the flexures, the suction applied in step (d) substantially eliminating liquid surrounding the electrodes during ablation.

89. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 6 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member, away from tissue and into the tubular member the suction applied in step (d) substantially eliminates eliminating liquid surrounding the electrodes during ablation.

90. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 7 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction to the tubular member and through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue, the suction drawing the moisture through the tubular member, the suction applied in step (d) substantially eliminating eliminates liquid surrounding the electrodes during ablation.

91. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 15 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a fluid permeable elastic member having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array into contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate;

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue; and

(e) applying suction through the tubular member to draw the tissue into contact with the electrode array, the suction applied in step (d) substantially eliminating eliminates liquid surrounding the electrodes during ablation.

92. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 5 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member and a pair of elongate flexures wherein each flexure includes at least one opening, the electrode array including a [[the]] fluid permeable elastic member comprising comprises a moisture permeable envelope having a hollow interior [[,]] and having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition by expanding the flexures;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue and allowing at least a portion of the moisture to pass through the openings in the flexures, wherein the suction step (d) causes the moisture to pass into the hollow interior of the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the electrode array.

93. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 6 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a [[the]] fluid permeable elastic member comprising comprises a moisture permeable envelope having a hollow interior[[,]] and having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member, away from tissue and into the tubular member and wherein the suction step (d) causes the moisture to pass into the hollow interior of the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the electrode array.

94. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 7 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an expandable electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a [[the]] fluid permeable elastic member comprising comprises a moisture permeable envelope having a hollow interior[[,]] and having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array in contact with tissue to be ablated and moving the array to an expanded condition;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate; and

(d) during step (c), applying suction to the tubular member and through the fluid permeable elastic member to cause moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue, the suction drawing the moisture through the tubular member, and wherein the suction step (d)] causes the moisture to pass into the hollow interior of the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the electrode array.

95. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~The method of claim 15 wherein~~ A method of ablating and/or coagulating tissue, comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an ablation device including an electrode array carried by an elongate tubular member, the electrode array including a [[the]] fluid permeable elastic member comprises comprising a moisture permeable envelope having a hollow interior[[,]] and having insulating regions and conductive regions thereon;

(b) positioning the electrode array into contact with tissue to be ablated;

(c) delivering RF energy through the array to the tissue to cause the tissue to dehydrate;

(d) permitting moisture generated during the dehydration of step (c) to pass into the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the tissue; and

(e) applying suction through the tubular member to draw the tissue into contact with the electrode array and wherein the suction step (d) causes the moisture to pass into the hollow interior of the fluid permeable elastic member and away from the electrode array.

96. (NEW) The method of claim 84, 85, 86, 92, 93, 94 or 95, wherein the suction draws tissue into contact with the electrode carrying member.

97. (NEW) The method of claim 96 wherein the tissue is inside an organ, and wherein the suction at least partially collapses the organ onto the electrode carrying member.

98. (NEW) The method of claim 84, 85, 86, 87, 92, 93, 94 or 95, wherein the tissue is within a uterus, wherein the positioning step passes the electrode array through the cervix and into the uterus, and wherein the method further includes forming a seal around the elongate tubular member at the cervix.

99. (NEW) The method of claim 84, 85, 86, 87, 92, 93, 94 or 95 wherein the fluid permeable elastic member includes metallized filaments.

100. (NEW) The method of claim 99 wherein the metallized filaments include elastic and inelastic filaments.

101. (NEW) The method of claim 100 wherein the metallized filaments include filaments of spandex and nylon.

102. (NEW) The method of claim 84, 85, 86, 87, 92, 93, 94 or 95 wherein said suction substantially preventing formation of a low-impedance liquid layer around the electrode array during ablation/coagulation using the electrode array.

103. (NEW) The method of claim 84, 85, 86 or 87 wherein substantially the entire bipolar electrode array maintains continuous contact with the tissue to be ablated during said ablation and/or coagulation of the tissue.